

1 What is claimed is:

2
3 1. A printing system comprising:

4 a processor configured to generate a rasterized print job from a print job; and
5 a storage device coupled to the processor and configured to store the rasterized print
6 job, said storage device located externally of the processor.
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8 2. The printing system of claim 1, further comprising:

9 an image producing device configured to house said processor.
10

11 3. The printing system of claim 1, wherein said storage device is configured to store and
12 retrieve a plurality of rasterized print jobs generated by said processor and said system further
13 comprises:

14 a plurality of image producing devices, said plurality of image producing devices
15 being in communication with a network.
16

17 4. The printing system of claim 1, further comprising:

18 one or more print job generators, each print job generator being configured to
19 generate a print job, said print job generators being in communication with said network.
20

21 5. The printing system of claim 1, further comprising:

22 a plurality of processors, each configured to receive a print job and generate a
23 rasterized print job from said print job and send said rasterized print job through said
24 network.
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26 6. The printing system of claim 1, further comprising:

27 a print server to receive a print job from the print job generator and cause a rasterized
28 print job to be sent from the storage device.
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30 7. The printing system of claim 6, wherein said print server is further configured to
31 cause a new rasterized print job to be stored on the storage device.
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1 8. An image producing device comprising:
2 a processor with software configured to receive an instruction and, in response to said
3 instruction, retrieve a print job from a storage device external to said image producing device.
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5 9. The image producing device of claim 8 wherein said device is configured to generate
6 a rasterized print job and send the rasterized print job to an external storage device.
7

8 10. The image producing device of claim 8, wherein said software on said processor is
9 configured to generate instructions relating to one or more print jobs and to send said
10 instructions to at least one of an external storage device and/or another image producing
11 device, through a network.
12

13 11. The image producing device of claim 8, wherein said processor is configured to
14 merge two separate print jobs into a single print job, where at least one of said print jobs is
15 received from an external storage device.
16

17 12. A method for use in creating an image on print media said method comprising the
18 steps of:
19 determining that a print job should be divided among multiple image producing
20 devices; and
21 sending said print job to multiple image producing devices.
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23 13. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:
24 sending said print job to an external storage device with an instruction for an image
25 producing device to execute said print job;
26

27 14. The method of claim 12 further comprising the step of:
28 dividing said print job into segments for execution in multiple steps.
29

30 15. A method for use in creating an image on print media said method comprising the
31 steps of:
32 retrieving an existing rasterized print job from an external storage device; and
33 generating an image from said rasterized print job using an image producing device.
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- 1 16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:
2 receiving an unrasterized print job from a device on a network.
3
- 4 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of:
5 processing said unrasterized print job into a rasterized print job; and
6 sending the rasterized print job to an external storage device.
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- 8 18. The method of claim 15, further comprising steps of:
9 receiving an instruction to conduct a print job and determining whether the print job is
10 partially stored on an external storage device in rasterized or unrasterized form;
11 retrieving any portion of the print job that is stored on an external storage device in
12 rasterized or unrasterized form;
13 processing any portion of the print job that is in unrasterized form into a rasterized
14 form;
15 merging the rasterized portions of the print job into a single rasterized print job; and
16 sending the merged print job to a print engine.
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- 18 19. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:
19 receiving an instruction to retrieve a print job from an external storage device.
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- 21 20. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:
22 determining whether a print job is stored on external storage device in rasterized form
23 by checking a directory to determine whether the rasterized print job is stored on an external
24 storage device.
25
- 26 21. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:
27 sending the rasterized print job to a plurality of image producing devices.
28
- 29 22. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of:
30 sending data to at least an external storage device and/or a second image producing
31 device.
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1 23. A printing system comprising:
2 means for printing including means for rasterizing a print job to produce a rasterized
3 print job;
4 means for transmitting said rasterized print job externally of said means for printing;
5 means for storing said rasterized print job externally of said means for printing; and
6 means for retrieving said rasterized print job back to said means for printing.